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SURVEY OF FARMERS' EXPENDITURES

1955

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Summary tabulations of the Survey of Farmers' Expenditures in 1955 indicate that expenditures of farm operator families for family living purposes averaged \$3,309. The data were obtained from a survey made by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of the Census of the U. S. Department of Commerce of farm operators in early 1956.

The largest single group of expenditures was for housing which averaged \$868 (including home furnishings and household operation). This included outlays averaging \$167 for new and existing dwellings and additions to dwellings which for some purposes may be considered as investments. The second largest expenditure group was food, which averaged \$833. The food outlays represented purchased food only, excluding the value of food produced on the farm and consumed on the farm where grown. Clothing expenditures amounted to \$427; and transportation, \$378. Farm family expenditures for medical care averaged \$240 in 1955. All other outlays for goods and services including recreation and personal insurance, together with several other items, amounted to \$453, or 14 percent of the total.

Cash contributions and gifts averaged \$110 per family. If gifts of house furnishing, food, clothing, and transportation items had been placed in this group, as some analysts prefer, this category would have been increased by \$33, with appropriate reductions in the specific groups.

The accompanying data comprises only part of the information collected in the survey, which covered farm production as well as family living expenditures. The purpose of the survey was to secure data to use in modernizing the weights for the Parity Index and for improving the estimates of farm operators' production expenses. The information will, in addition, serve many other purposes. For example, the survey provides the only comprehensive information on farm family living and production expenditures in a recent period. It provides a means of better appraisal of farm family levels of living, and furnishes the first comprehensive information of the size of post-war farm market, for both family living and production goods.

The survey covered approximately 11,500 farms in all sections of the United States. Data were collected from farm families directly by enumerators, with the field work in each State conducted under the direction of the State Agricultural Statistician of the Agricultural Marketing Service. The farm families interviewed for the survey were selected on a probability basis, using regional and type-of-farming areas and economic class of farm as a bases of stratification. Data concerning family living expenditures were collected from about 4,500 predesignated families, and data concerning farm production expenditures were collected from the remaining number in the sample. Excellent cooperation was extended to the enumerators by the families selected for survey.

Data relating to production expenditures are in process of compilation, and will be issued subsequently. More detailed and extensive tables will be issued from time to time.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Washington, D. C.
(2-57)

Average Family Living Expenditures of Farm Operator Families, by Economic Class
of Farm, for the United States, 1955

Kind of expenditure	Average expenditure per farm operator family				
	All Economic class of farm				
	Classes	I & II	III - V	VI	VII & VIII
Total	\$3,309	\$5,070	\$3,212	\$2,821	
Food	833	1,081	803	782	
At home	716	917	692	673	
Away from home ^{2/}	117	164	111	109	
Housing	868	1,436	839	692	
Shelter ^{3/}	351	658	329	273	
Furnishings and equipment	214	354	204	179	
Household operation	303	474	306	240	
Clothing	427	633	435	349	
Transportation, family share.	378	543	332	373	
Medical care.	240	327	242	210	
Other goods and services	453	788	449	342	
Recreation.	124	210	125	94	
Personal insurance	86	220	80	48	
Personal care	70	103	70	58	
Tobacco & alcoholic drinks.	68	86	68	61	
Reading and education	44	77	44	32	
Miscellaneous	61	92	62	49	
Contributions and cash gifts	110	212	112	73	

^{1/} Based on status as determined for the 1954 Census of Agriculture, Classes I & II include farms with value of sales of \$10,000 and over; Classes III to V include farms with value of sales of \$1,200 to \$9,999; Classes VI to VIII include farms with value of sales \$250 to \$1,199, part-time and residential farms.

^{2/} Includes beverages purchased with meals.

^{3/} Includes cost of acquired dwellings, additions to owners' dwellings, repairs and alterations, interest, taxes, insurance, settlement charges on purchased dwellings, and cash-rent paid for off-farm rented dwellings.

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